

May 2006 Newsletter



Enabling communities
to help themselves

Amy and Alex visit Nekemte

In the last week of February and the first two weeks of March this year, 2006, I visited Ethiopia with Dr Alexis Taylor of the Exeter-Ethiopia Link.

I have known Alex for a number of years through my parents. I was keen to travel with her because apart from anything else she is a lovely woman, also I am very interested in Africa, I never thought I would go to Ethiopia (which is a good reason to go in my eyes) and as preparation for my Development Studies course at University which I will begin in September. Having just finished A level Photography I took my camera along in the hope of getting some good photos, which I am glad to say I did.

We spent a week or so in Gondar with Kate Fereday from Plymouth who runs a community centre and child sponsorship scheme.

Later in our trip we travelled to Nekemte. The first thing that hit me about Nekemte was the dust. When I got out of Alemu Nega's landrover my white t-shirt was brown apart from the section that had been against the seat. We went to a café for dinner. The café was interesting as the front section has been demolished and extra rooms had been added on to the back of the building. I later found out this was because the road was being widened and resurfaced, kicking up even more dust!

I visited Burqa Jato School by myself and received an overwhelming welcome from teachers and pupils alike. The school seemed to have a wonderful atmosphere but not such wonderful resources. I really liked their debating area; a shady area in the trees, the benches in which had been built by students in a hands on woodwork class, and which was used for debating important issues, communicating in English was also encouraged in the area to help students with their spoken English.



This photo shows a boy at Burqa Jato ringing the school bell, made from the brake drum of a lorry; The Ethiopian trend of reusing is something I really admire and is one of the areas in which I feel Britain should aspire to be like Ethiopia.

While in Nekemte I also met up with James Dyson (not of the vacuum cleaner fame) who is an ex-primary school teacher from Britain who is on VSO teaching at the Teacher Training College. E-mailing him before I left England was really useful as he told me, as best he could, what to

expect in Ethiopia, what to take with me and perhaps more importantly not to take photos of the airports as I would get arrested!

I had some very lengthy chats with Alemu in our car journeys to and from Nekemte. He told me of an Ethiopian saying that suggests that before you are married you look with both eyes, ever searching, and that once you are married you see with one eye covered so as to not confuse images and be able to focus on one thing at a time. He said he felt a lot of visitors to Ethiopia point out and try and change everything that isn't like their home countries, and he very kindly said that I didn't do this, and that I was viewing Ethiopia through one eye.

This brings me to the end of this piece of writing, and it also brings me to an invitation for you to visit The Pickled Walnut Restaurant in Okehampton (my home town) some time in June to view Ethiopia Through One Eye: an exhibition of some of the photos I took in Ethiopia.

Thank you for this opportunity.
Amy Wilson

We've also received the following charming letter/report from Garadew after a recent visit to his family in Hareto:

Hello Every One!

I had an interesting visit of Hareto and its surrounding from April 21-29, 2006. My parents and relatives are all well.

As per my observation and the information I got from Hareto people, the presence of the following basic changes can be put forward:

- Hareto has started using Electricity for 24 hours since April.
- Preparatory class program (Pre-University Program) has been conducted at Hareto High School.
- Site is reserved for Tele service.

- As you might recall grade 7& 8 are now under Hareto Elementary School.
- The present Head of Hareto High School is Ato Kumela (Replacing Ato Dereje) whereas Ato Gezahegn is the Head of Hareto Elementary School (Replacing Ato Temesgen Jebessa who passed of Hypertension).
- The Head of Hareto Clinic, Ato Jiregna, has already left Hareto Clinic but I could not know who replaced him.

Although instability has been over there in line with the election of May 2005, the teaching -learning process is know to some extent well.

In short , the above ones can be said about Hareto although I could say much more had I got enough time for observation and interviewing dwellers. Please keep in touch.

Best wishes,
Garedew

Coffee Morning-Can you help?

Chris Burns is organising a coffee morning at:

- St Stephen's Church in Exeter High Street
- on Saturday 26th August, starting at 10 am
- good quality books or bric-a-brac needed
- cakes and other produce on the day would also be welcome
- if you can help on the day please contact Jill Grainger (01392 435648) as soon as possible.
- We need at least 12 people to help so see if you can spare some time on the Saturday of the August Bank Holiday weekend.

FUND RAISING, our special thanks go to:

- Rob Barrow of Spec-Care, Whipton, who was one of 35,000 cyclists to complete the 108 km Cape Argus bike race in South Africa. He raised over £1000 for the eye project from sponsorship. Rob and some of the Committee were hosted by the Lord Mayor of Exeter (Councillor Peter Wadham) at the Guildhall to celebrate his success.



- Pauline Gibson for hosting a coffee morning + CD/book sale back in February which raised £174.
- Katrina O'Neill of David & Charles, Newton Abbot, saw an article about the Link in a magazine and decided to run the Great West Run (13 miles) in Exeter on our behalf, and raised almost £600 in the process.



Also, many thanks for other donations received from the following:

- J & P Madden
- Highclere Trefoil Guild
- John Lloyd

Can you find another member?

Membership will soon top 100 and this year we are aiming to double that. Another hundred members is £1000 towards the projects in Ethiopia.

With Gift Aid that is enough to:

- *equip 2 classrooms with seats and desks for 50 students, and a teacher's table each*
- *provide a capped spring*
- *buy 250 Macmillan books for school libraries.*

Please help us in our efforts to find more regular donors for our projects.
(See back page for contact information)

Fancy a pleasant local walk?

Peter Grainger is organising a sponsored walk from Exeter down the Exe Estuary on 24 September, with different options for the length to be walked.



If you would like a sponsor form please contact Peter on 01392-435648 or visit the website after the end of July.

Come along and bring your friends to
Vern's Summer Party

for Exeter-Ethiopia Link and Exodus Sri Lankan Fund

6pm until late
Saturday 8th July
at

14 Magdalen Road, EXETER

Tel: 01392 277910

Admission - £5 min donation

Food available - Ethiopian and barbeque

Bring a bottle

Exeter-Ethiopia Link

The Exeter-Ethiopia Link was set up in 1987 to promote a Community Link between Exeter in Devon, England and Hareto in Wellega, Ethiopia. In 1994 the Link included Nekemte, the principal town in Wellega.

The Link supports: Health, Agricultural and Educational projects in Hareto and Nekemte and encourages links between schools in Exeter and the communities in Ethiopia.

For further information contact:

Peter Grainger tel: 01392-435648
e-mail: petergrainger@eclipse.co.uk

or (for membership)
Penny Pullen: 01392-274603
e-mail: penpul@tiscali.co.uk

or view our website:
www.exeterethiopia.org

For Sale: Money to the Link

Mens Grey Trainers size 9½. Clarke's Tread Lite Gore-Tex in excellent condition.

Cost £65 but going for £20.

Two wooden garden chairs with cast iron ends £10 the pair.

Contact Bruce on Exeter 437479.

Any copy for future newsletters can be sent to the editor, Bruce Hebbard, at Cedar House, Pincus Road, Exeter EX2 9EN (Tel: 01392-437479) or by e-mail to b.hebbard@talk21.com

Devon Aid / Exeter-Ethiopia Link
Registered Charity No 1000293